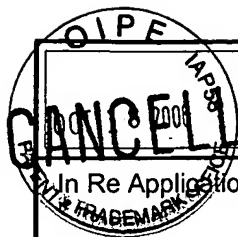


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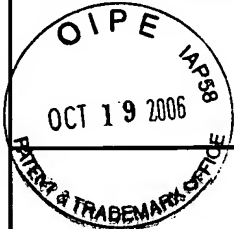
Docket No. 33752/US

JFW

In Re Application Of: Herman Oskam

Application No.	Filing Date	Examiner	Customer No.	Group Art Unit	Confirmation No.
10/737,061	Dec. 15, 2003	Blair M. Johnson	20686	3634	5240

Invention: RAISING AND LOWERING MECHANISM FOR BLINDS

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS:

Transmitted herewith in triplicate is the Appeal Brief in this application, with respect to the Notice of Appeal filed on September 6, 2006

The fee for filing this Appeal Brief is: \$500.00

- ☒ A check in the amount of the fee is enclosed.
- ☐ The Director has already been authorized to charge fees in this application to a Deposit Account.
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Gary M. Polumbus
Signature

Dated: Oct. 18, 2006

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PATENT
Attorney Docket No. 33752/US
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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of:

Herman Oskam

Serial No. 10/737,061

Filed: December 15, 2003

For: RAISING AND LOWERING MECHANISM
FOR BLINDS

Examiner: Blair Johnson

Art Unit: 3634

Confirmation No. 5240

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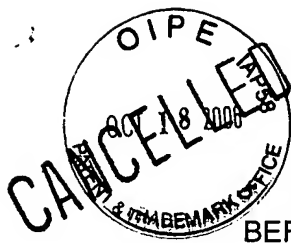
1. Transmittal of Appeal Brief;
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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

Application No. : 10/737,061
Applicant : Herman Oskam
Filed : December 15, 2003
TC/A.U. : 3634
Examiner : Blair M. Johnson



Confirmation No. 5240

Docket No. : 33752/US
Customer No. : 20686

For : RAISING AND LOWERING MECHANISM FOR BLINDS

APPEAL BRIEF UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 41.37

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Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Pursuant to a Notice of Appeal filed September 6, 2006, Applicant is filing this Appeal Brief under 37 C.F.R. § 41.37.

I. Real Party in Interest

The real party in interest in the present appeal is Hunter Douglas Industries BV by virtue of an assignment from the inventors Herman Oskam, Nicholaas Dekker and Jan Pieter Wetsema. The document, executed by the inventors, is enclosed herewith as Exhibit A.

II. Related Appeals and Interferences

There are no related appeals or interferences.

III. Status of Claims

Claims 5, 7, 30, 32 and 41-44 are allowed. Claims 2, 3, 9-12, 17-28, 33-36 and 38-40 are rejected. Claims 1, 8 and 13-15 are withdrawn from further consideration.

IV. Status of Amendments After Final

An amendment after final was filed August 1, 2006 wherein claims 6 and 31, which had been previously objected to as being dependant upon a rejected-based claim, were cancelled and re-written as new claims 43 and 44, respectively. In an advisory action dated August 25,

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2006, the amendment filed after final on August 1, 2006 was entered, indicating the allowance of new claims 43 and 44 and the cancellation of claims 6 and 31 from the application.

V. Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

The application contains two independent claims, which were rejected, and are therefore under consideration for appeal. These are claims 17 and 26 and a concise explanation of the subject matter defined in each of these claims will be set forth hereafter.

A. Claim 17

Claim 17 is directed to a lifting and lowering mechanism for a blind that includes a rotatable drive shaft 11 (page 7, line 18; Fig. 1); at least one lift cord 9 (page 7, line 17; Fig. 1); and a cord spool 3 (page 7, line 14; Figs. 1 and 2); wherein the at least one lift cord is mounted for rotation with the drive shaft and wherein the cord spool has a large diameter end 19 (page 7, line 25; Figs. 1 and 2); and a small diameter end 23 (page 7, line 26; Fig. 2); with these large and small diameter ends defining a generally conical circumferential winding surface 17/21 (page 7, lines 27-29; Fig. 2); and wherein the lift cord is wound onto and unwound from the large diameter end (page 8, lines 15 and 16, page 10, lines 14-19; Fig. 1), the cord spool further having a plurality of longitudinally extending radial ribs on the winding surface (page 7, lines 19-22; page 10, line 23 - page 12, line 3; Fig. 1), with the ribs being located at least on the circumferential area adjoining the large diameter end (page 7, line 23 – page 8, line 4; Fig. 1).

B. Claim 26

Claim 26 is directed to a lifting and lowering mechanism for a blind, including a rotatable drive shaft 11 (page 7, line 18; Fig. 1); at least one lift cord 9 (page 7, line 17; Fig. 1); and a cord spool 3 (page 7, line 14; Figs. 1 and 2), wherein the cord spool includes an elongated generally cylindrical body with a first end 19 (page 7, line 25; Figs. 1 and 2) and a second end 21 (page 7, line 25; Figs. 1 and 2) and a circumferential outer surface 13 (page 7, line 19; Fig. 1) extending there between; said lift cord being windable onto said first end and unwindable from said first end (page 8, lines 15 and 16; page 10, lines 14-19; Fig. 1); wherein the circumferential outer surface 13 has a plurality of generally parallel extending longitudinal ribs 15 (page 7, lines 19-22; Figs. 1 and 2).

VI. Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

A. While claim 16 was rejected under § 112, it was cancelled pursuant to the amendment after final filed August 1, 2006, which was entered per the advisory action of August 25, 2006.

B. Claims 2, 3, 11, 12, 16-23, 26-28, 33-36 and 38-40 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Richard Fraczek, U.S. Pub. No. 2003/0178155 ("Fraczek") in view of Buck et al. (U.S. 4,574,597) – the examiner has stated Fraczek discloses everything, including the cam surface 22 and the notched end plug 34, except the ribs. However, the examiner states Buck et al. discloses such so as to grip the cord, and it would have been obvious to provide Fraczek with such ribs for this purpose.

C. Claims 2, 3, 9, 10, 17-19, 21 and 26-28 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fu-Mei Fun, U.S. 5,908,062 ("Fun") in view of Buck et al. - the examiner has stated Fun discloses everything except the ribs. However, the examiner states Buck et al. discloses such so as to grip the cord, and it would have been obvious to provide Fun with such ribs for this purpose.

D. Claims 24 and 25 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fraczek in view of Buck et al. and further in view of Judkins - the examiner has stated Judkins discloses a grommet 18 for providing a bearing for the cords, so as to not damage the structure in the head rail, and it would have been obvious to provide such a grommet for the head rail of Fraczek for this purpose.

VII. Argument

A. Claims 2, 3, 11, 12, 16-23, 26-28, 33-36 and 38-40 –

As mentioned above, the rejection of these claims is under § 103(a) as the examiner feels the subject matter thereof is unpatentable over Fraczek in view of Buck et al. The Fraczek patent is directed to a control lift and tilt mechanism for a horizontal blind that includes a generally conical body or cord-gathering shaft 6, having an optional cord plug 34 secured to one end for anchoring an end of a lifting cord 16, which is fed to the cord-gathering shaft at the opposite end, so the lifting cord will wrap spirally around the cord-gathering shaft and unwind, accordingly from the same end at which it was wound onto the shaft. The Fraczek patent does not disclose the use of ribs for addressing frictional concerns that are inherent in such a lift mechanism. The examiner has cited the patent to Buck et al. as disclosing ribs on a drum on which yarns found in knitting machines are provided, and he has concluded it would be obvious to provide the shaft 6 of Fraczek with ribs, as disclosed in Buck et al. to arrive upon a mechanism as set forth in these claims. As will be appreciated, this set of claims includes the two independent claims in the application 17 and 26, as well as other claims which are dependent directly or indirectly on one of the independent claims. For the reasons set forth hereafter, applicant believes both of the independent claims are patently distinct from the

Fraczek and Buck et al. references and are therefore allowable along with the remaining claims dependent thereon.

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves, or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine the reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all of the claim limitations. The teachings or suggestion to make the claim combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art and not based on the applicant's disclosure. *MPEP* § 2142. The mere fact that references can be combined or modified does not render the resultant combination obvious unless the prior art also suggests the desirability of the combination. *MPEP* § 2143.01. To support a conclusion that the claimed invention is directed to obvious subject matter, either the references must expressly or impliedly suggest the claimed invention or the examiner must present a convincing line of reasoning as to why the artisan would have found the claimed invention to be obvious in light of the teachings of the references. *MPEP* § 2142. Where such support is lacking, the examiner procedurally fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

Applicant does not believe there is any suggestion or motivation in the Fraczek or Buck et al. references, or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to combine the references inasmuch as the references come from non-relevant arts. Further, there would be no reasonable expectation of success when combining the two references as the provision of ribs in the drum of the Buck et al. reference are provided for a purpose totally distinct and different from the benefits obtained from ribs in the lift spool of the present invention. Accordingly, one skilled in the art of trying to resolve or overcome problems associated with lift spools for window coverings would not look to the art of yarn winding on drums as disclosed in the Buck et al. patent, as there is no suggestion in that patent for addressing or overcoming the issues raised in the art of lift spools for window coverings.

Referencing the Buck et al. patent in Column 3, beginning with line 63 and continuing through Column 4, line 20, it will be appreciated the patent states the conical circumferential surface or cylindrical surface may be embodied with grooves or slots extending in the axial direction so that the yarn rests only on the rib-like portions of the surface between the grooves or slots. It is further stated that since the storage drum is provided only with surfaces of a relatively simple geometrical shape, the manufacture of the storage drum is much less complicated than in the case of structure in which large areas of the circumferential surface

must have an accurately predetermined continuous curvature. In other words, it appears the grooves and slots that may be provided in the drum create geometrical shapes, so that the entire surface of the drum does not have to be a predetermined accurate continuous curvature. Accordingly, the ribs defined between the grooves or slots were not provided to control friction of the yarns on the drum, but rather to control machining issues associated with obtaining accurate continuous curvatures.

As further noted in Column 3, lines 10-16 and lines 42-45, it is desirable in the transfer of yarns across the drum that they remain in a state of relaxation, and this is accomplished by providing a shoulder between an initial conical surface and an ultimate cylindrical surface across which the yarns pass. Accordingly, the yarns drop off the shoulder onto a smaller diameter surface which allows them to be relaxed which apparently enhances the ability of the yarn to translate along the length of the drum as it is being wound onto one end of the drum and removed from the opposite end of the drum.

In the present invention, the lift spool has been specifically designed with the described ribbing to control friction of the lift cord in both a circumferential and longitudinal direction relative to the spool. The provision of longitudinally extending ribs establishes a relatively small contacting surface between the lift cords and the spool as the cords are only resting on the ribs (page 7, line 30 – page 8, line 4) as opposed to a continuous circumferential surface. This relatively small contacting surface reduces the friction between the cord and the spool in the longitudinal direction of the spool, thereby facilitating the sliding movement of the cord winding toward the second smaller end of the spool. At the same time this is happening, the longitudinal edges of the ribs provide enhanced friction between the cord and the spool in the circumferential direction of the spool. This enhanced circumferential friction causes tension in the cord, which can be fairly high before the cord engages the spool, to be reduced as it is wrapped around the spool since the tension is transferred to the spool. Since much of the cord tension is transferred to the spool itself, the tension in the cord is reduced with each subsequent wrap around the spool whereby it can translate longitudinally and particularly in light of the fact that the frictional surface on the spool is reduced through the use of ribbing as opposed to a continuous cylindrical or conical wrap surface. Accordingly, the ribs in the present invention are provided to control the friction and tension in the lift cords, which can be substantial, and change the tension in the cords through friction with surfaces on the spool so that the cords can be translated longitudinally of the spool as it is wrapped around the spool. The particular design of the ribbing permits this result without the use of shoulders or other such features found in the yarn winding art of Buck et al.

Accordingly, it is not felt an artisan skilled in the art of window coverings concerned with controlling the tension in a lift cord so that the tension will be circumferentially reduced while allowing longitudinal translation of the cord along the lift spool would look to the art of yarns in knitting mills. This art, which first of all would likely be totally unfamiliar to him, would secondly not address the issues he is concerned with. Rather, in the art of yarn drums, it appears the ribbing, at least in the Buck et al. reference is provided so that a more finely machined spool is not necessary and a shoulder is provided off which the yarns can drop in order to reduce their tension and create relaxation for the transitory movement of the yarn across the drum.

Accordingly, even if one skilled in the art of lift cord drums for window coverings were aware of the features of yarn spools, the teachings in Buck et al. would certainly not suggest a solution to the problem of reducing circumferential tension in a lift cord of a window covering so that it will translate longitudinally as these issues are not even discussed in Buck et al. The problem uniquely associated with lift spools has been solved with the present invention through the specific design and placement of ribbing on the spool. The Buck et al. reference simply provides a spool with ribs where there is no suggestion or discussion of any use of ribs for frictional control of the tension in a yarn and accordingly, while the teachings in the two references might be physically combinable, there is certainly no suggestion to do so, so that the motivation required for obviousness under § 103 is lacking.

(1) Claim 17

In furtherance of the above, claim 17 provides for a lifting and lowering mechanism for a blind that includes a cord spool, having a plurality of longitudinally extending, radial ribs on a winding surface which are located at least on the circumferential area joining a large diameter end. Inasmuch as the prior art relating to lift mechanisms for blinds is devoid of the concept of providing ribbing which has the benefits delineated above, it is not felt claim 17 is fairly rendered obvious by the prior art by making up for the lack of teaching in the art of window blinds with the use of a yarn-winding drum found in the knitting industry that fails to recognize or teach the benefits derived from utilizing ribs for reducing circumferential tension in a lift cord and reducing longitudinal sliding friction thereby.

(2) Claim 26

Claim 26 provides for a lifting and lowering mechanism for a blind which also includes a cord spool having a plurality of generally parallel longitudinally extending ribs and for the same reasons mentioned with regard to claim 17, it is not felt the prior art fairly renders the subject matter of claim 26 unpatentable.

(3) Claims 2, 3, 11, 12, 16, 18-23, 27, 28 and 33-36

These claims being dependent directly or indirectly from claim 17 or 26 are believed to be allowable for the same reasons.

B. Claims 2, 3, 9, 10, 17-19, 21, and 26-28 –

The patent to Fun which is the primary reference relied upon in the rejection of these claims is a patent directed to a lifting track of a curtain wherein a cylindrical body 43 having a smooth outer surface is utilized to anchor at one end thereof, a cord, which can be wrapped spirally around the body. Again, there is no ribbing provided in this reference for controlling the tension in the cord 22 as it is wrapped around the body 43. The examiner has combined the teachings in the Buck et al. reference from the field of yarn-winding drums in the textile industry for making up for the deficiencies in the Fun patent. For the reasons set forth above in VII. A., it is not felt there is any logic to combining these references, particularly when there is no suggestion or motivation in either reference for placing ribbing on a lift spool for a window covering, such as a curtain or the like, so that the tension in the lift cord can be controlled to permit longitudinal movement of the cord along the length of the spool. The provision of such ribs on a spool in order to overcome a problem unique to this industry is certainly not shown or suggested in the Buck et al. reference as the ribs thereon are provided for the purpose of controlling machining issues during manufacture of the spools. This is totally distinct from the control of tension in the yarn with that tension being controlled with a drop off a shoulder.

Accordingly, the claims in this group are felt to be allowable for the same reasons as in VII. A. Independent claims 17 and 26 are part of this group of claims and contain the elements of a spool in a lifting and lowering mechanism for a blind having ribbing therealong. This is not suggested by the prior art for the reasons specified and with the remaining claims in this group being dependent upon one or the other of independent claims 17 and 26, they too are felt to be allowable.

C. Claims 24 and 25 –

Claims 24 and 25 have been rejected for the same reasons as the claims set forth in VII. A. and B. with the addition of the patent to Judkins being cited for disclosing the use of a

grommet 18. For the reasons set forth above with regard to the claims in VII. A. and B., it is not felt the rejection of claims 24 and 25 are supported by the requirements of § 103.

Conclusion

Inasmuch as each claim under consideration in this appeal is directed to a lifting and lowering mechanism for a blind that includes a spool around which a lift cord can be wrapped and unwrapped, and wherein the spool includes ribbing extending longitudinally thereof with the ribbing solving the problems set forth herein above, it is not felt the prior art relating to blinds or other forms of coverings for architectural openings such as windows, doors or the like discloses or suggests the invention defined in the claims on appeal. In rejecting the claims, the examiner has had to go to an unrelated or non-relevant art to find a drum around which a yarn, which has properties quite distinct from a lift cord in that yarns are somewhat longitudinally extensible in nature, can be wrapped to find the use of ribbing. Not only is the art of yarn drums felt to be non-analogous, the ribbing found on such drums is provided for a quite distinct purpose so that the reference is not a reference that one in the art of window coverings would look to in order to solve the problem of controlling tension in a lift cord to obtain the desired behavior of the lift cord. There is certainly no mention in the art of record of a spool around which lift cord is wrapped that would suggest providing ribbing to solve the problem solved with the present invention. While the references combined by the examiner to reject the claims under § 103 might be physically combinable, there is no motivation to do so inasmuch as the problem addressed by the present invention is not raised, discussed or addressed in the prior art.

Accordingly, it is felt each of the claims remaining rejected in the present application is patently distinct from the prior art and it is requested the board find such claims allowable.

Signed in Denver, Colorado, this 18th day of October, 2006.

Respectfully submitted,



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VIII. CLAIMS APPENDIX

CLAIMS ON APPEAL

2. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 17 wherein, the ribs extend along the entire length of the winding surface from the large diameter end to the small diameter end.

3. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 17 wherein the ribs are short ribs which extend only along a first longitudinal section of the spool and, the first longitudinal section starting at the large diameter end and extending a part of the entire length of the spool towards the small diameter end.

9. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 17 wherein a first spool section starts at the large diameter end and extends a part of the entire given length of the spool towards the small diameter end, a second spool portion extends towards the small diameter end after the first spool section, and the first spool section is conical with a stronger taper than the second spool section.

10. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 9 wherein, the length of the second spool section is longer than the length of the first spool portion.

11. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 17 wherein the large diameter end includes a mounting means and a support means with the mounting means rotatably mounting the cord spool in the support means, and wherein the support means includes a camming surface adjacent the large diameter end for moving a first winding of the cord about the spool in a direction away from the large diameter end of the cord spool, such that a next winding will not overlap the first winding.

12. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 17 further including at least one longitudinally extending slot in the small diameter end adapted to receive an end of the lift cord for attachment to the spool.

17. A lifting and lowering mechanism for a blind, including: a rotatable drive shaft; at least one lift cord; and a cord spool for winding and unwinding the at least one lift cord and mounted for rotation with the drive shaft, the cord spool having a large diameter end and a small diameter end, defining a generally conical circumferential winding surface therebetween for the cord, said lift cord being wound onto and unwound from said large diameter end; wherein the cord spool has a plurality of longitudinally extending, radial ribs on the winding surface, which are located at least on the circumferential area adjoining the large diameter end.

18. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 17, further including an end plug attached to the small diameter end to receive one end of the at least one lift cord.

19. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 18, wherein the end plug has a cylindrical portion forming an extension to the spool, but being without a taper or with a taper opposite to the spool.

20. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 18, wherein the end plug has a plurality of circumferentially distributed radial slots, each of which is adapted to receive an end of the at least one lift cord for attachment.

21. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 17, further including a support for rotatably supporting the cord spool.

22. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 21, wherein the support has a camming surface adjacent the large diameter end of the cord spool for guiding the lift cord to be wound onto the spool.

23. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 21 wherein a first side of the support is arranged to rotatably support the cord spool and a second side, opposite the first side, of the support is arranged to support a drive mechanism, such as a motor.

24. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 12 further including a grommet for insertion into a corresponding aperture in a head rail and for guiding said at least one lift cord to or from the cord spool, the support having a base arranged to hold the grommet, such that the support can be fixed to a head rail by means of the grommet.

25. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 22 further including a grommet for insertion into a corresponding aperture in a head rail and for guiding said at least one lift cord to or from the cord spool, the support having a base arranged to hold the grommet, such that the support can be fixed to a head rail by means of the grommet.

26. A lifting and lowering mechanism for a blind, including:

- a rotatable drive shaft;

- at least one lift cord; and

- a cord spool including an elongated generally cylindrical body with a first end and a second end and a circumferential outer surface of a given length extending therebetween, said lift cord being windable onto said first end and unwindable from said first end, wherein the circumferential outer surface has a plurality of generally parallel extending longitudinal ribs.

27. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 26 wherein the ribs extend along the entire given length of the outer surface from the large diameter end to the small diameter end.

28. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 26 wherein the ribs are short ribs which extend only along a first longitudinal section of the spool and, the first longitudinal section starting at the first end and extending a part of the entire given length of the spool towards the second end.

33. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 26 wherein the first end includes a mounting means for rotatably mounting the cord spool in a support means, and wherein the support means includes a camming surface adjacent the first end for moving a first winding of the cord about the spool in a direction away from the first end of the cord spool, such that a next winding will not overlap the first winding.

34. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 26 further including at least one longitudinally extending slot in the second end adapted to receive an end of the lift cord for attachment to the spool.

35. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 26 further including an end plug attachable to the second end and adapted to receive an end of the lift cord for attachment to the spool.

36. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 35 wherein the end plug has a longitudinally extending cylindrical portion forming an extension to the cord spool.

38. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 35 wherein said second end and the end plug include respective cooperating features which are able to secure resiliently the elongated generally cylindrical body and the end plug in a plurality of relative

angular positions such that the end plug may be snap indexed between the relative angular positions to adjust cord length.

39. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 35 wherein the end plug has a plurality of circumferentially distributed radial slots, each of which is adapted to receive an end of the at least one lift cord for attachment.

40. The lifting and lowering mechanism of claim 33 wherein a first side of the support is arranged to rotatably support the cord spool and a second side, opposite the first side, of the support is arranged to support a drive mechanism, such as a motor.

IX. EVIDENCE APPENDIX

NONE

X. RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX

NONE



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OCTOBER 21, 2005

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OSKAM, HERMAN

DOC DATE: 11/17/2003

ASSIGNOR:
DEKKER, NICOLAAS

DOC DATE: 12/01/2003

ASSIGNOR:
WETSEMA, JAN PIETER

DOC DATE: 12/01/2003

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016669/0946 PAGE 2

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FILING DATE: 12/15/2003

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TITLE: RAISING AND LOWERING MECHANISM FOR BLINDS

ANTIONE ROYALL, EXAMINER
ASSIGNMENT DIVISION
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P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

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ASSIGNMENT

WHEREAS we,
Nicolaas Dekker residing at Pottenbakkerij 19, 2993 CN Barendrecht, and
Herman Oskam, residing at Vllisterdijk 64a, 2855 AK Vlist, and ✓ West
Jan Pieter Wetsema, residing at Stadhoudersweg 29d, 3038 EC Rotterdam,

all citizens of the Netherlands, hereinafter called (the "Inventors"), are the joint inventors of an invention in ***Raising and lowering mechanism for blinds***, for which invention a European patent application with serial number **02080464.7** was filed in the European Patent Office on **19-12-2002**, and we are entitled to assign our entire right, title and interest world-wide in and to the invention and any intellectual property protection for the invention, including the Europe patent application therefor; and

WHEREAS HUNTER DOUGLAS INDUSTRIES BV (the "Company"), having a place of business at Piekstraat 2, 3071 EL Rotterdam, The Netherlands, is desirous of obtaining our entire right, title and interest world-wide in and to the invention and any intellectual property protection for the invention, including the European patent application therefor;

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the sum of one Euro (€ 1,00) and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt of which is acknowledged, we hereby sell, assign and transfer to the Company, its successors, legal representatives and assigns, our entire right, title and interest world-wide in and to the invention and all applications for industrial property protection, including, without limitation, all applications for patents, utility models and designs, whether original, divisional, continuation, renewal, reissue, or the like, now on file or subsequently filed, for the invention world-wide, together with the right to file such applications and the right to claim for such applications the priority rights derived from the European patent application under any national or international intellectual property laws or agreements and any industrial property protection including, without limitation, patents, utility models and designs, now or hereafter granted, for the invention world-wide, and any extensions, renewals, reissues or the like thereof.

FURTHER we hereby authorize and request any official of any state, responsible for issuing patents or other evidence or forms of any industrial property protection, to issue the same for the invention to the Company, its successors, legal representatives and assigns, in accordance with this assignment.

ALSO we hereby agree that we have the full right to convey our entire, right, title and interest in and to the invention world-wide and all applications for industrial property protection for the invention world-wide and that we have not executed, and will not execute, any agreement in conflict with this assignment.

MOREOVER we hereby agree that we will communicate to the Company, its successors, legal representatives and assigns any facts known to us respecting the invention and testify in any legal proceeding, sign any lawful papers, execute any original, divisional, continuation and reissue applications, make any rightful oaths, and generally do everything possible to aid the Company, its successors, legal representatives and assigns to obtain and enforce proper protection for the invention world-wide.

FURTHER we hereby agree that this assignment is to be considered effective as of the filing date of the above mentioned patent application.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, we have hereunto set our hands the day, month and year opposite our signatures below.

1/12/03 Oudenbosch
(Date and Place)

(Date and Place)

(Date and Place)

17-11-03 VList
(Date and Place)

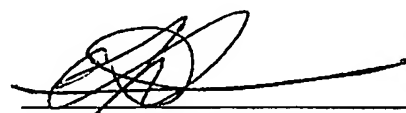
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1/12/03 Oudenbosch
(Date and Place)

(Date and Place)

(Date and Place)


(Inventor : Nicolaas Dekker)

Jannie van Ravesteyn
(Witness : Signature and Name)

Nathalie ML Howard
(Witness : Signature and Name)

H. Oskam
(Inventor : Herman Oskam)

Jannie van Ravesteyn
(Witness : Signature and Name)

Nathalie ML Howard
(Witness : Signature and Name)


(Inventor : Jan Pieter Wetsema)

Jannie van Ravesteyn
(Witness : Signature and Name)

Nathalie ML Howard
(Witness : Signature and Name)

THE COMPANY hereby acknowledges the previous statements of the Inventors and accepts their assignment.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, the Company, by its undersigned Director, sets its hand the day, month and year opposite its signature.

2 December 2003, Rotterdam
Date and Place

Ronald A. Schapira
Ronald A. Schapira
Director of HUNTER DOUGLAS INDUSTRIES B.V.

Rotterdam 2-12-2003
Date and Place

Jannie van Ravenswaay
(Witness : Signature and Name)
Nathalie ML Horward
(Witness : Signature and Name)